

	<h2 style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Independent Medical Examination (IME) Improvement Project</i></b></h2>
<b>December 2002</b>	<b>Changes in the IME Process Under Consideration</b>
<p><b><u>Background</u></b> <i>L&amp;I considering a revamp of the IME process.</i></p> <p><b><u>Recent efforts</u></b> <i>Teams were formed to research and recommend potential changes to many aspects of the IME process with initial recommendations due in December 2002.</i></p> <p><b><u>For More Information</u></b> <i>Please Contact David Overby (360) 902-6791 or over235@lni.wa.gov</i></p> <p><b><u>For further updates</u></b> <i>Please continue to check the L&amp;I web page at <a href="http://www.lni.wa.gov/hsa/default.htm">http://www.lni.wa.gov/hsa/default.htm</a></i></p>	<p><b><u>What's New?</u></b> As a part of the IME Improvement Project, we have six teams developing potential changes in the IME process in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Management</li> <li>• IME Requests</li> <li>• Administrative Services</li> <li>• Provider Numbers</li> <li>• Provider Training</li> <li>• Fee Revision</li> </ul> <p>A seventh team, the L&amp;I Initiative team, as been meeting since June. They have revised the guidelines for selecting the IME specialty with input from claims and medical staff. The team is now working on revising the referral questions.</p> <p><b><u>Rumor Control</u></b> In an effort to put to rest some inaccurate rumors and validate others: We are <u>not</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• doing away with all IMEs;</li> <li>• eliminating all multiple examiner exams;</li> <li>• implementing all of MedFx's recommendations;</li> <li>• referring all IMEs to occupational medical examiners; or,</li> <li>• changing the current qualification requirements for approved IME examiners.</li> </ul> <p>We are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revising the referral questions;</li> <li>• increasing single examiner exams when appropriate;</li> <li>• considering direct payment to examiners with separate payment to contractors for scheduling the examiner(s), preparation of the file, identifying missing information, and sending the file to the examiner prior to the IME;</li> <li>• revising the fee schedule; and,</li> <li>• exploring more effective provider education.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Next Steps</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present proposed changes to our internal steering committee, which includes management from Claims Administration (including operations, policy and quality), Health Services Analysis, Office of the Medical Director, Self Insurance, and field operations.</li> <li>• When we have our proposals developed, there will be an opportunity for our external stakeholders to comment.</li> </ul>